

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended) An HVAC duct and pillar assembly for an automotive vehicle comprising:

a rear pillar having a vertically extending section and a horizontally extending section, the pillar having a wall defining a hollow space extending axially therein, the hollow space communicating with a first opening through the vertical section and a second opening through the horizontal section;

an HVAC duct disposed within the hollow space and extending between the first and second openings through the pillar, the duct having an air inlet aligned with the first opening and an air outlet aligned with the second opening;

a layer of a cellular structure disposed between the duct and the wall of the pillar, and expandable adhesive between the cellular structure and the wall for bonding the cellular structure to the wall.

Claim 2 (Previously Presented) The HVAC duct and pillar assembly according to claim 1 wherein the duct is made of polyamide and the wall of the pillar is made of sheet metal.

Claim 3 (Previously Presented) The HVAC duct and pillar assembly according to claim 2 wherein the sheet metal is steel.

Claim 4 (Currently Amended) The HVAC duct and pillar assembly according to claim 3 wherein interior trim is disposed adjacent to an interior wall portion of the wall of the ~~rear~~ pillar and body structure is disposed adjacent to an exterior wall portion of the wall of the ~~rear~~ pillar.

Claim 5 (Previously Presented) The HVAC duct and pillar assembly according to claim 1 wherein the cellular structure is structural foam.

Claim 6 (Currently Amended) A duct and vehicular frame member assembly, comprising:

a hollow vehicular frame member constructed and arranged to support exterior structure of the vehicle, the frame member having a wall defining an axially extending space with lateral openings through the frame member;

a duct extending coaxially in the space and having duct openings aligned with the lateral openings through the frame member, and

a layer of a cellular structure disposed between the duct and the wall, the layer of the cellular structure being adhered to the wall of the hollow vehicular frame member.

Claim 7 (Previously Presented) The duct and vehicular frame member assembly according to claim 6 wherein the vehicular frame member is a pillar and wherein the duct is an HVAC duct with an inlet and an outlet aligned with the openings.

Claim 8 (Previously Presented) The duct and vehicular frame member according to claim 6 wherein the vehicular frame member is made of metal and the duct is made of a resinous material.

Claim 9 (Previously Presented) The duct and vehicular frame member according to claim 6 wherein the cellular structure is structural foam.

Claim 10 (Previously Presented) The duct and vehicular frame member assembly of claim 6 further including expandable adhesive between the cellular structure and the wall.

Claim 11 (Previously Presented) The duct and vehicular frame member assembly of claim 6 wherein the cellular structure is expandable foam which expands between the duct and the wall.

Claim 12 (Previously Presented) The duct and wall assembly of claim 11 wherein the structural foam is polyurethane.

Claim 13 (Withdrawn) A method of making a duct and vehicular frame member assembly, comprising:

providing a vehicular frame member with a wall defining a hollow axially extending space with openings through the wall at locations spaced from one another;

providing a duct having inlet and outlet openings and covered with a layer of cellular

structure;

disposing a heat expandable adhesive between the cellular structure and the wall of the vehicular frame member;

retaining the duct within the axially extending hollow space of the vehicular frame member with the inlet and outlet of the duct being aligned with the openings through the wall of the vehicular frame member, and

expanding the heat expandable adhesive by heating the vehicular frame member to bond the heat expandable adhesive to the wall of the vehicular frame member.

Claim 14 (Withdrawn) The method of claim 13 wherein the cellular structure is structural foam.

Claim 15 (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 14 wherein heating the vehicular frame member occurs during baking of the vehicular frame member after painting the vehicular frame member.

Claim 16 (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 15 wherein the duct is made of a polyamide material.

Claim 17 (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 13 wherein the vehicular frame member is adapted to be positioned in a vehicle between a passenger compartment of the vehicle and an exterior body structure of the vehicle, and wherein the wall of the vehicular frame

member has an interior wall portion and an exterior wall portion, the interior portion adapted to be disposed adjacent to the cabin and the exterior portion adapted to be disposed adjacent to the body structure with the openings being through the interior portion; the method further including attaching the duct to the interior portion, and thereafter welding the exterior portion to the interior portion for defining the axially extending space which encloses the duct therein.

Claim 18 (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 13 wherein the vehicular frame member is a rear pillar which is part of a frame enclosing the passenger compartment of the vehicle, and wherein the method is an assembly step occurring during framing the vehicle but before adding interior trim and exterior body structure to the frame.

Claim 19 (New) A rear HVAC duct and pillar assembly for an automotive vehicle, wherein the assembly has reduced space consumption with increased cross-sectional area enclosed by the pillar, comprising:

a pillar having a vertically extending section and a horizontally extending section, the pillar having a wall defining a hollow space extending axially therein, the hollow space communicating with a first opening through the vertical section and a second opening through the horizontal section;

an HVAC duct disposed within the hollow space and extending between the first and second openings through the pillar, the duct having an air inlet aligned with the first opening and an air outlet aligned with the second opening;

a layer of a cellular structure disposed between the duct and the wall of the pillar, and

expandable adhesive between the cellular structure and the wall for bonding the cellular structure to the wall wherein the cross-sectional area of the pillar is increased while reducing the space consumption of the assembly to meet noise and vibration requirement for a first structure mode by having a larger section size for the rear pillar.

Claim 20 (New) The HVAC duct and pillar assembly according to claim 19 wherein the duct is made of polyamide and the wall of the pillar is made of sheet metal.

Claim 21 (New) The HVAC duct and pillar assembly according to claim 20 wherein the sheet metal is steel.

Claim 22 (New) The rear HVAC duct and pillar assembly according to claim 21 wherein interior trim is disposed adjacent to an interior wall portion of the wall of the pillar and body structure is disposed adjacent to an exterior wall portion of the wall of the pillar.

Claim 23 (New) The HVAC duct and pillar assembly according to claim 19 wherein the cellular structure is structural foam.

Claim 24 (New) The HVAC duct and pillar assembly of claim 1 wherein the pillar is a rear pillar.